



Tennessee News Release

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In Cooperation with Tennessee Department of Agriculture

UNUSUAL 2010 PRODUCES LESS THAN AVERAGE RESULTS

NASHVILLE, January 12, 2011 – Historic spring flooding followed by hot, dry summer weather rivaled some of the most unusual weather on record. These conditions caused significant challenges for Tennessee producers. All major row crops yielded lower than average with the exception of cotton, which outperformed the average by a comfortable margin. This is according to a recent survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office. These conditions spurred an exceptionally early harvest. State Director Debra Kenerson noted that, "Weather always causes a measure of uncertainty for Tennessee farmers and 2010 was no exception. Despite this, producers were able to adjust and manage the challenges."

COTTON YIELD UNCHANGED FROM 2009

Tennessee's cotton production is estimated at 680,000 bales, up 188,000 bales from 2009. The State's final yield averaged 843 pounds of lint per acre, unchanged from the previous year and slightly better than average. Producers planted 390,000 acres, up 90,000 acres from a year earlier. Harvested area was 387,000 acres, up 107,000 acres from 2009. Spring price rallies, the relatively good returns compared with other crops, and normal crop rotation in the major producing counties led to a rise in acreage from last year. After planting and through the summer, the cotton crop received just enough rainfall to make. This, coupled with excellent heat units, produced a decent crop. Hot, dry conditions around harvest allowed defoliants to work very well. As a result, the crop opened nicely and was relatively easy to pick. Harvest was wrapped up in early to mid November, well ahead of the normal pace.

CORN YIELDS DOWN MORE THAN 30 BUSHELS FROM 2009 RECORD

Corn for grain production is estimated at 74.9 million bushels, down 14 percent from 2009. The final yield, at 117 bushels per acre, was down 31 bushels from the state record set a year earlier. Tennessee corn producers planted 710,000 acres during 2010, up 40,000 from a year earlier. Harvested area for grain was 640,000 acres with 45,000 acres for silage. Despite the widespread flooding of thousands of acres and prolonged wet field conditions, corn planting was mostly completed by the end of May with the crop emerging on schedule. As a result of these conditions, some acres initially planned for corn were switched to other crops. The weather turned dry to end the spring and through mid-summer. The lack of moisture, coupled with high temperatures, caused problems during the critical pollination phase and also during the ear-fill stage. Favorable harvest weather allowed virtually uninterrupted progress during September. Harvest was wrapped up by mid-October at a record pace of three weeks ahead of normal. Silage yield, at 16.0 tons per acre, was down 5.0 tons from the state record set in 2009. Production totaled 720,000 tons.

SOYBEAN PRODUCTION DOWN SHARPLY

Soybean production is estimated at 43.7 million bushels, down 37 percent from the year earlier. The State's final soybean yield is estimated at 31 bushels per acre, down 14 bushels from the previous year's state record. Producers planted 1,450,000 acres and harvested 1,410,000 acres for beans, down 120,000 acres each from the previous year. By mid-June, planting and development progress were both near the average pace. July was one of the hottest on record with sparse rainfall; consequently soybeans were highly variable in condition and yield potential. Growers were cautiously optimistic, as a few soaking rains could have really boosted yields. Unfortunately, the soaking rains needed during August never came. This fact, coupled with hot and dry weather, caused a reduction in yield. There were pockets across the state that did receive adequate rainfall, but most of these places were not in the major soybean producing areas. Continued dry weather during the months of September and October caused rapid development of the soybean crop. Harvest was virtually wrapped up during the first week of November, a couple of weeks ahead of the normal pace.

BURLEY PRODUCTION SLIDES FROM 2009

Burley tobacco growers produced 24.9 million pounds, down 7 percent from 2009. The State's final burley yields averaged 1,660 pounds per acre, down 260 pounds from a year earlier. Growers harvested 15,000 acres, up 1,000 from the previous year. Harvest, with the exception of dark fire-cured, was about wrapped-up by the end of September. The completion of dark fire-cured harvest was delayed as growers, counting on double-burning, had to wait on a slow curing crop. Curing conditions were generally poor in Middle Tennessee and manageable elsewhere. Yields were highly variable depending on when the crop was set and who caught an occasional shower. Some of the earliest set tobacco just withered and died in the intense heat and dry weather while some of the later tobacco caught some showers. Flooding was an issue also. Tennessee's dark fire-cured tobacco yields are estimated at 2,900 pounds, down 200 pounds from 2009. Dark air-cured yields are estimated at 2,600 pounds per acre, down 100 pounds from a year earlier.

(OVER)

WINTER WHEAT SEEDINGS UP SIGNIFICANTLY

Total winter wheat acreage for the next season of 2011 is forecast at 310,000 acres, up 50,000 acres from 2010. Seeding was slowed as growers waited for moisture. By the first week of October, wheat seeding had begun. As of the week ending November 7, over 80 percent of the state’s acreage had been planted. The crop is rated in mostly good condition.

HAY PRODUCTION DOWN SLIGHTLY FROM 2009

Total hay production, at 4.15 million tons, was down 2 percent from the 2009 crop. Hay acreage, at 1,965,000 acres, was up 3 percent from a year earlier. Hay yields averaged 2.11 tons per acre. Alfalfa production, at 51,000 tons, was down 5,000 tons from 2009. Alfalfa producers harvested 15,000 acres, unchanged from the previous year. Alfalfa yields averaged 3.40 tons per acre, down 0.30 tons from the previous year. Growers seeded 1,000 acres of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures during 2010, unchanged from the year earlier. Tennessee's 2010 hay growing season was marked by several successive hot, dry weeks following a record-breaking May flooding event. The weather took its toll on the state's pasture and hay fields. As of the week ending October 10, nearly two-thirds of the state's pasture land was rated in poor or very poor condition. By the end of the summer, farmers were cutting hay on acreage not earlier intended for harvest. Stocks of hay stored on Tennessee farms totaled 2.99 million tons on December 1, 2010, down 7 percent from 2009. Stocks represented 72 percent of this year’s production, compared with 76 percent on December 1, 2009.

CROP ESTIMATES: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, 2010, WITH COMPARISONS

Crop	Units	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
TENNESSEE							
Apples ¹	lb.	---	---	---	---	8,000	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	590	640	148	117	87,320	74,880
Corn for silage	ton	50	45	21	16	1,050	720
Cotton ²	lb.	280	387	843	843	492	680
Cottonseed	ton	---	---	---	---	157.9	222.0
Hay, All	ton	1,915	1,965	2.21	2.11	4,236	4,146
Other	ton	1,900	1,950	2.20	2.10	4,180	4,095
Alfalfa	ton	15	15	3.70	3.40	56	51
Soybeans	bu.	1,530	1,410	45.0	31.0	68,850	43,710
Tobacco, All	lb.	21.6	22.3	2,313	2,051	49,960	45,740
Dark fire-cured	lb.	6.4	6.2	3,100	2,900	19,840	17,980
Burley	lb.	14.0	15.0	1,920	1,660	26,880	24,900
Dark air-cured	lb.	1.2	1.1	2,700	2,600	3,240	2,860
Winter Wheat	bu.	340	180	51.0	53.0	17,340	9,540
UNITED STATES							
Apples ¹	lb.	---	---	---	---	9,914,900	9,413,500
Corn for grain	bu.	79,490	81,446	164.7	152.8	13,091,862	12,446,865
Corn for silage	ton	5,605	5,567	19.3	19.3	108,209	107,314
Cotton ²	lb.	7,528.7	10,706.7	777	821	12,187.5	18,314.5
Cottonseed	ton	---	---	---	---	4,148.8	6,191.0
Hay, All	ton	59,775	59,862	2.47	2.43	147,700	145,556
Other	ton	38,528	39,906	1.99	1.95	76,628	77,653
Alfalfa	ton	21,247	19,956	3.35	3.40	71,072	67,903
Soybeans	bu.	76,372	76,616	44.0	43.5	3,359,011	3,329,341
Tobacco, All	lb.	354.0	337.5	2,323	2,133	822,581	719,786
Dark fire-cured	lb.	16.2	15.7	3,281	3,083	52,990	48,255
Burley	lb.	101.9	97.6	2,109	1,922	214,896	187,570
Dark air-cured	lb.	5.8	5.5	2,938	2,760	17,040	15,180
Winter Wheat	bu.	34,510	31,749	44.2	46.8	1,524,608	1,485,236

¹Forecast. Preliminary data to be released January 22, 2011.
² Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.